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**SOVIET DEFENSE AGAINST OPERATION BARBAROSSA**  
**A Possible Model For Future Soviet Defensive Doctrine**

**A Monograph**  
**by**  
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SEP 13 1991



**School of Advanced Military Studies**  
**United States Army Command and General Staff College**  
**Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**Second Term 90-91**

Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

**91-10362**



# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE 15/04/91		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED MONOGRAPH	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE SOVIET DEFENSE AGAINST OPERATION BARBAROSSA--A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR FUTURE SOVIET DEFENSIVE DOCTRINE (U)				5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJ TERRY B. WILSON, USA					
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES ATTN: ATZL-SWV FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027-6900 COM (913) 684-3437 AUTOVON 552-3437				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED.				12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)  SEE ATTACHED					
14. SUBJECT TERMS SOVIET DEFENSE DEFENSIVE DOCTRINE		OPERATION BARBAROSSA REASONABLE SUFFICIENCY FORTIFIED REGIONS		15. NUMBER OF PAGES 55	
				16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED		20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UNLIMITED	



## ABSTRACT

### SOVIET DEFENSE AGAINST OPERATION BARBAROSSA: A Possible Model for Future Soviet Defensive Doctrine.

By Major Terry B. Wilson, USA, 55 pages.

This monograph examines the historic attack by Adolph Hitler's Germany against the Soviet defenses in 1941. It examines actions of both armed forces to analyze what went wrong and what went right for each side. It focuses on Soviet defenses to determine the usefulness of defensive planning and operations of 1941 to today's announced policy of "reasonable sufficiency" and "non-offensive defense."

The monograph begins with an analysis of current Soviet military doctrine and President Gorbachev's stated political ideal of "reasonable sufficiency" and his goal for the military of a doctrine of "non-offensive defense." The monograph continues with an examination of Soviet military theory, an historical analysis of Operation Barbarossa, and an analysis of the usefulness of the campaign for modern doctrinal development. The Soviets use historical models in the scientific development of their doctrine. Thus, the method of examining this campaign for use in future doctrinal development is valid. Analytical criteria used in evaluation of the model as the Soviets might view it include:

Is the model ideologically supportable through use of the dialectic?

Does the model meet the needs established by political doctrine?

Does the model demonstrate success or potential success to accomplish the stated Soviet goals?

The monograph concludes that many aspects of the model may be useful in the future development of Soviet defensive doctrine despite the fact that the campaign was considered a failure by the Soviets. Such concepts as a mixture of fixed defenses with large scale counterattacks at both the tactical and operational levels would provide the Soviets a balanced approach to defensive planning. The model also shows that Soviet thinking during 1941 was anything but defensive. The Soviets were always looking forward to offensive operations as guided by their theoretical development. While this could make the campaign appear to focus on the offensive, most Soviet military writers view pure defense as unacceptable. Those writers think in terms of a mix of offense and defense as necessary to successful defenses. Pure defensive operations were not a part of defenses against Hitler's invasion in 1941 and should not be expected in future Soviet doctrine.

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## INTRODUCTION

It is generally realized that our doctrine rests on a foundation not of preparing for war, but rather of preventing the latter; on the assurance of peace; reliable defense of the USSR and its allies; maintaining combat readiness of troops and fleets at a level sufficient for guaranteed repulse, in combination with allied armies, of armed aggression. That is, the doctrine is intended expressly for defense. I consider its major guidelines and new approaches for their implementation to be as follows: The Armed Forces are to be employed only to counter an aggression launched from without; we are not to be the first to initiate war, if we or our allies are not the target of this aggression; under no circumstances will we be the first to employ nuclear weapons, at an outbreak of war, the Armed Forces are to base their activities on defensive actions.<sup>1</sup>

This statement made by Army General Mikhail Alekseyevich Moiseyev, Chief of the Soviet General Staff, reflects the current doctrinal thinking in the USSR. It resulted from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's 1985 announcement that the USSR would adopt a policy of "reasonable sufficiency" in defense of the USSR. As a result of realizing the need for changes in Soviet politics and economics, Gorbachev decided to adopt or force changes in military thinking. Such abrupt departures from the significant offensive force and capability of the past do not come easily to a military that has dominated foreign policy and the Soviet economy for many years. In fact, Moiseyev's and Gorbachev's views on defense are not universal in the Soviet Armed Forces.<sup>2</sup>

These new views do reflect about five years of concerted debates over the nature of future war. Included in the debates are such issues as democratization, market economy, openness in Soviet society, and future priorities for the economic well being of the USSR. At first glance one would think that defense doctrine would be separated from these other issues. Such is not the case in the USSR. This is because of the nature of their definition of doctrine.

Soviet military doctrine includes two key subcomponents by definition: political doctrine and military-technical doctrine. Military doctrine is a statement of the official views of the USSR about the characteristics of modern wars and defines their conduct in broad terms.<sup>3</sup> The doctrine is developed by the political leadership, specifically the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Marxist-Leninist ideology plays a great role in development of military doctrine. While the political side of military doctrine envisions the nature and character of future war, the military-technical issues include structure of the armed forces, principles of use of the armed forces, development of technology and equipment, training and readiness, and development of the military art. "Military technical doctrine has a historical and transitional aspect. This aspect changes with the status of the posture of forces in the international arena, new requirements of politics, economic

capabilities, scientific achievements, and the level of preparation of the Armed Forces."<sup>4</sup>

The undefined Gorbachev policy of "reasonable sufficiency" was translated to mean different things to different leaders. It was, though, Gorbachev's vision of a political doctrine. He later included the idea of "defensive defense" as a more refined vision of future war. He left these terms to civilian reformers and the military leadership for specificity.<sup>5</sup> This sparked a continuing debate over how offensive a defensive doctrine should be. To prove his commitment to "reasonable sufficiency" and defensive doctrine, Gorbachev announced unilateral military reductions in 1988.<sup>6</sup> With "reasonable sufficiency" as political doctrine, the Armed Forces, including the civilian "institutniki" and the military staff, are faced with determining how to translate this into military-technical doctrine.

As Gorbachev consolidated power over the years following his seizure of power in 1985, he attempted to relieve some of the pressure on designing a military-technical doctrine through unilateral reform. Reductions in military spending, unilateral force reductions, intermediate range nuclear force treaties, and Conventional Forces In Europe negotiations provided the military with Gorbachev's true intentions regarding defensive doctrine. The military, under Communist Party supervision, continues to struggle with the technical process of developing



forces, training and readiness, weapons technology, and military art.

This monograph examines what Soviet operational art might resemble in the future as it takes the shape of Gorbachev's policy of "reasonable sufficiency" further refined as "non-offensive defense". To examine such operational art, I will look specifically at how the Soviets viewed the defense in their past theoretical development and how they used defense in war. I will focus my analysis by examining Soviet defensive preparations and operations during Hitler's Operation Barbarossa, the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union. From outward appearance this model seems to personify the pure defense against a stronger opponent. Defense against a stronger opponent is prevalent in Soviet discussions in development of the defensive doctrine today. Colonel G. Ionin stated this principle clearly when he said, "...the essence of the defense consists of repulsing an offensive by superior enemy forces..."<sup>7</sup>

In the Soviet methodology, modeling based on historical analysis of past wars and campaigns plays a significant role in preparation for future conflict. The study of operations during the Great Patriotic War provided models for the development of Soviet maneuver doctrine.<sup>8</sup> As the Soviets explore development of defensive doctrine for future use, they concentrate on lessons of the past to assist in providing vision

for the future. Modeling provides a baseline for study and modernization based on results of the past compared to current capabilities and future intentions. It primarily aids in providing a base for scientific analysis.

In developing the current defensive doctrine and strategy, Soviet military leaders are seriously examining four possible models of the defense. These are:

1. An immediate counter offensive following an enemy attack (the forces for the counteroffensive would in practice be indistinguishable from offensive forces).
2. An initial defensive phase to draw in the enemy and weaken him prior to a counteroffensive into enemy territory (e.g. the Battle of Kursk).
3. A counteroffensive that does not enter enemy-held territory.
4. A highly defensive model, renouncing all offensive action above the tactical level, using fortifications, strong points, and small local counterattacks.<sup>9</sup>

The first model implies almost pure offensive similar to that seen in pre-First World War Europe and, at least in Soviet opinion, during the Cold War.<sup>10</sup> The third option seems to be the front-runner and the Soviets are using the 1939 Battle of Khalkin Gol as their example.<sup>11</sup> The fourth model implies that both sides are too weak "to undertake any operations of strategic consequence."<sup>12</sup>

With the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organization in 1991, another possible model comes to mind. Since the Soviets will eventually withdraw most forces into their own territories, a situation similar to that of 1941 prior to Hitler's invasion appears probable. Does the Soviet defensive campaign against Hitler's Operation Barbarossa provide a suitable model for future development of Soviet doctrine and operational art? This will be the focus of this monograph.

In order for a model to be viewed as relevant by the Soviets, it must meet certain criteria. The criteria include assurance that: the model follows the ideological Marxist-Leninist teachings through the use of the dialectic; the model matches the political doctrine of "reasonable sufficiency"; and the model demonstrates success. I will use these criteria in examining Soviet defenses during Operation Barbarossa to determine if this serves as a viable model for future use. The criteria must first be explained in more detail.

The first criterion is that the model must be subjected to Marxist-Leninist historical and scientific dialectics. All "state actions must eventually be justified in terms of the official ideology."<sup>13</sup> The model must follow the laws of dialectical materialism so it can be proven academically and publicly as both "scientific" and "objective".<sup>14</sup> When first viewed, the principle of the dialectic seems simple and logical. A thesis and antithesis form a clash of interests. The result of the clash is a

synthesis which becomes the thesis for the next clash with an antithesis. The process applies to scientific events, social events, military events, and historical events.<sup>15</sup> The process is little understood in the West. It has become a way of life for the Soviets though, a part of their thinking skills, and the dialectic has been finely tuned over the last several generations. Unfortunately, the dialectic can be skewed to fit any answer so long as it provides an advantage to the Soviets.<sup>16</sup> This does not negate its usefulness as a test, though. It remains a requirement in Soviet thinking and the model must still meet the dialectic test to be seen as even remotely feasible for future use.

The model must also meet the needs established by the political doctrine. In fact, the political doctrine and military-technical doctrine must be mutually supportive. Through examining the defenses during Operation Barbarossa, we will analyze the military-technical aspects of the campaign to determine if the campaign could serve as a model for the political doctrine of "reasonable sufficiency" for the future. This requires a close comparison of the political doctrine with the operational goals and results of the defensive operation and military art.

The final criterion is one dealing with success. The model must demonstrate sufficient success or potential success to accomplish the stated Soviet goals. Measuring success requires

subjective analysis in the model we will examine. From the beginning we knew the Soviets viewed their initial defenses against Hitler's invasion as a near total defeat. Yet, just as with the dialectic, the bottom-line remains how analysis is conducted to provide advantages. In our case there might be some aspects of the defenses of the past that are useful in planning for the future.

In order to fully examine the research question, this monograph will first explore the Soviet theory of war. This examination aids us in understanding what the Soviets believe to be important in war and provides us some insight into how they think about war. Next, a brief examination of Operation Barbarossa is necessary to fully analyze its worth as a model for the future. We will then analyze the defensive campaign, concentrating on the tests provided by the criteria. This will enable a determination of the campaign's usefulness as a future model in Soviet doctrinal preparation. The analysis will also provide us with implications for the future should the campaign or aspects of the campaign be useful to Soviet military planners.

## **SOVIET THEORY**

The Soviet Union, unlike the West, has a well developed theoretical framework and body of knowledge appertaining to war in all its respects. Because war has so impressed itself on the Soviet consciousness (it must be remembered that the Soviet and Russian experience of war

over the past two centuries has been very much more painful than that of, for example, the USA or UK) war is very high on the Soviet list of priorities for study.<sup>17</sup>

War, for the Soviets, is the continuation of policy by violent means.<sup>18</sup> This Clausewitzian theme has had considerable applicability in the Soviet struggle over what they still consider to be their chief enemy, imperialism.<sup>19</sup> The theme has permeated Soviet doctrine and strategy since Lenin first emerged as a leader. "Marxism-Leninism provides the framework of logic and philosophy for Soviet military thinking, and the Communist Party excludes from this framework all concepts and ideologies of which it does not approve."<sup>20</sup> In this vein, Soviets insist that war theory in the past as well as in the future must be concerned with survival of the Soviet state.<sup>21</sup>

The insistence on following the framework of Marxism-Leninism means that in the future we will continue to see the same concepts and terminology we have seen in the past. In particular, the "laws" of dialectical materialism (a key principle in the Marx-Lenin approach to scientific objectivity) in further development of war theory will continue to prevail. "Far from being the non-ideological 'pragmatists' envisioned by some western commentators, he (Gorbachev) and many of his subordinates seem at times to be almost obsessed with the ideological implications and justifications of their policies."<sup>22</sup>

Continuing to develop these themes, we see that little, from the macro level, will change in the future. We can deduce

that the Soviet theory of war will continue to look at the same laws and principles as in the past. At least they will examine theory from the same framework as in the past. There will be some slight variation in these themes, however. We have long considered the Soviet view of offensive operations as one of their key tenets. Will this change under Gorbachev's leadership? When one examines the ground the Soviets and Russians have fought over for so many centuries, one would be foolish to think that any force could defend without an offensive capability. Any force that would attempt a purely "defensive defense" in the USSR would not be practicing skillful military art. In the vast expanses of the USSR, only a mixture of offense and defense can defeat an attack into this territory.<sup>23</sup> We will see an increase in defensive training and defensive thought in the Soviet Armed Forces as they have announced. But the basic tenet that victory is achieved only through offensive action will not readily disappear from the theoretical inventory.

Mass, maneuver, and firepower are three other theoretical themes that may see changes or variations in future thinking. These changes will, most likely, be only slight. Change will occur as a result of scientific analysis using the dialectic as the analytical tool. For instance, the relationship between mass and the introduction of nuclear firepower are dialectically opposed to one another. Since nuclear weapons negate mass as

it was used during the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet military's synthesis (solution) was development of the forward detachment at the tactical level and the operational maneuver group at the operational level. This really amounts to a reliance on maneuver as the synthesis.<sup>24</sup>

Firepower, the "Red God of War", will remain a key ingredient in military thinking. This was the great strength in the Imperial Russian Army and its traditions remain in the Red Army today. This technologically superior field will continue to grow. In fact, the Soviets see a new era in warfare with the introduction of precision weaponry, one as "deadly and complex as the nuclear battlefield..."<sup>25</sup> This may be one of the real reasons for Gorbachev's pursuit of change in the USSR. He may see that with the technical advantage currently enjoyed by the West, he needs to give the Soviet economy and science the time to both afford and develop the same technology.<sup>26</sup> Without it, the Soviet state is at imbalance with the West.

An additional change in theory stems from Gorbachev's current view of nuclear weapons and nuclear war. With the balance of nuclear arsenals between the US and USSR, the Soviets view a potential nuclear conflict as detrimental to the Soviet state. This places the idea of war being an extension of policy at risk. The Gorbachev solution is to demilitarize the problem by relying more on diplomacy and negotiation to reduce risk. Not all military leaders agree with Gorbachev,



because Gorbachev includes such acts as unilateral arms reductions in his political solutions.

Still key in Soviet theory are the components of military art. These components are strategy, operational art, and tactics. Strategy is the highest level of military art. It amounts to preparing the country for war and of planning and conducting wars.<sup>27</sup> Operational art is the theory and practice of preparing and conducting operations conducted by large strategic formations (fronts and groups of fronts) of the armed forces.<sup>28</sup> It also encompasses the nature of modern operations, laws of war, organization, and use of large forces (fronts and armies). It includes support operations and operational troop control.<sup>29</sup> This monograph focuses on operational art in examining the defenses against Hitler's 1941 invasion. Strategy guides operational art and therefore must also be included in considerable detail to fully understand the Soviet actions during the campaign.

Tactics is the lowest level of military art. It is the theory and practice of employment of smaller units (armies and below but focused more at division, regiment, and battalion levels).<sup>30</sup> It imbues the combined arms concepts considered so important to success. It is related to operational art in that the operational level commands provide direction to the tactical level commands.<sup>31</sup> Because of this relationship, many aspects

of tactics could not be excluded in the examination of Soviet defenses or the monograph would lack clarity.

In order to fully understand the Soviet defenses in June 1941, we must examine how they viewed war prior to Hitler's invasion. Much of this is couched in theory and needs to be explained in more detail as the theory developed into Soviet doctrine prior to the Great Patriotic War. This pre-war theory, when butted up against post-war experience, provided the genesis for current theory. The post-revolution/pre-Great Patriotic War development of the Red Army pitted Leon Trotsky against most of his experienced generals. Most of these generals' careers began in the Imperial Russian Army. They joined the Red Army and aided in bringing Lenin's Bolsheviks to power. Without their experience and military leadership, the revolution may never have been successful.

Trotsky became the first commissar for war under Lenin and remained in that position even as Stalin began his accession to power. With Trotsky, the Soviets began a long debate over offense versus defense in their strategy. So much attention has been paid to Soviet offensive-mindedness over the years that the defensive side of the debates has been ignored, at least until recently. As with most theoretical principles of the time in Soviet Russia, the debates took on a flavor of communism versus capitalism. If one looks deep, though, these debates also form the foundation of the modern

Red Army organization, strategy, operational art, and tactics. In addition, they tell us much about why the Red Army was so ill-prepared for war in June 1941.

In the 1920s, Trotsky espoused that a peasant army of the kind characteristic of Russia could only be suited to defensive operations. Trotsky pointed out that during the civil war the requirement for defensive maneuver and retreat dominated, especially since the soldiers were mere peasants, not an educated and motivated proletariat. He could find no ready recipes for developing a unified military doctrine based on Marxist-Leninist teachings.<sup>32</sup> His generals were searching for such a unified military doctrine and even advocated more professionalism in the military.

Trotsky was incorrect in his belief that Lenin's teachings offered no basis for developing military doctrine, though. Lenin had earlier noted six fundamental laws of Soviet military strategy which essentially became the focus of many military professionals in developing the Red Army in the 1920s. Lenin's fundamental laws were:

1. Understand the significance of choosing the direction of the main blow against the enemy.
2. Create a superiority of forces and resources in the direction of the blow.
3. Change forms and methods of combat depending on the situation.

4. Organize troops depending on the methods of warfare.
5. Understand the significance of strategic reserves.
6. Stress the importance of strategic leadership.

He then added, "To have an overwhelming advantage of forces at the decisive moment at the decisive point - that is the 'law' of military success."<sup>33</sup>

Many of the military professionals who were at odds with Trotsky's thinking were Stalin supporters and proteges. The disagreements came at a time when Stalin and Trotsky were competing for power in Russia. As Stalin came to power, Trotsky was replaced as war commissar and eventually removed from the party. The debates over unified military doctrine played a significant role in Trotsky's removal from the elite Soviet position.

One of the first generals to clash with Trotsky was Mikhail Vasilievich Frunze, a patron of Stalin.<sup>34</sup> Frunze, together with the then chief of the political administration of the Red Army, S. I. Gusev, focused their arguments on Marxist teachings, particularly in the area of creating a "military-theoretical staff of the proletariat state" to act as the "brain of the army." This roughly equated to a general staff, something Trotsky viewed as elitist and unnecessary in the Red Army. In July 1921, Frunze furthered his ideas and his clash with Trotsky when he advocated that the only way to defeat capitalism would be

through the force of arms. He favored seizing the initiative, acting offensively, and even advocated preemptive war. He also wrote that wars pitting professional armies against each other were no longer possible. War would involve the total resources of a state. Frunze went on to say that if the Soviets could not strike the first blow, they could retreat over great distances as was done against Napoleon in 1812. But in the end, only a decisive offensive could defeat the enemy. Frunze advocated large, maneuverable armies and did not like static fortifications.<sup>35</sup>

The next attack on Trotsky came from another Stalin protege, K. E. Voroshilov. Voroshilov continued to emphasize unified doctrine and revolutionary wars, conducted offensively. Trotsky fought off this attack, though, arguing that an army of peasants could not be trained or motivated to support an international revolution. He argued that peasants could only support defensive war; they could not be convinced that war outside their homeland was "just".<sup>36</sup>

These debates of the early 1920s took their toll on Trotsky. As a result of his disagreements with the generals and as a result of other political plays, he was removed from the Revolutionary Soviet in January 1925 and replaced by Frunze.

Capturing the lessons of the civil war and putting these lessons to practical use were still important military endeavors.

The first real use of these lessons came in the issuance of the 1925 Provisional Field Service Regulations. These called for close cooperation of all types of arms (the genesis of combined arms studies) and described the offensive as the main form of war. The goal of any defensive was to gain time for delivering the crushing offensive blow.<sup>37</sup> But the Field Service Regulations also placed emphasis on investing and holding critical zones.<sup>38</sup>

By 1929, Stalin had consolidated his power base and taking the lead from his military advisors invested heavily in building a military, even at the expense of other needed heavy industry. After 1933 and Hitler's rise to power in Germany, Stalin paid even more attention to defense planning, both in theory and in practical application.

Two other theorists must be included before proceeding to the Soviets' precise planning for the defense in 1941. A. A. Svechin was not satisfied with basing strategy merely on the lessons of the civil war. In his Strategy, published in 1927, he advocated a large-scale war of attrition. He felt that a long protracted war with continuously growing casualties would devastate enemy morale. Mikhail Tukhachevski, the advocate of deep attack, opposed such attrition style warfare. Tukhachevski was an advocate of mass, mobility, and offensive armies but with a clear leaning toward combined arms operations. At the time of his writings, others were espousing

the superiority of the tank and airplane over all other arms. These theories were completely counter to the social-political foundations of the Red Army.<sup>39</sup>

Tukhachevski also influenced defensive thinking. In his 1934 article "The Characteristics of Border Operations", he argued that mass movements of armies via rail to border areas was obsolete in the defense because of the threat of air attack. He instead advocated defenses in depth which would lead to protracted conflict and finally his professed deep attack tactics. He added that fortified regions along the border could act as shields in protecting the concentration of second echelon armies. The second echelon armies would then be used to deliver blows on the flanks of an advancing enemy. These tactics became the basis for Stalin's and Zhukov's defensive preparations in June 1941.

With such a plethora of theory and the evident understanding of offense and defense, the five year plans intended to revamp the military should have resulted in total preparation for war against Hitler in 1941. So where did the Soviets go wrong? In the Soviet view, theory will only be put into practice when the conditions fully warrant it. The offense won out over the defense in strategic development in the 1930s. In fact, in the latter part of the 1930s during and after Stalin's devastating purges of high ranking military officers little attention was paid to the defense. Though much attention

was placed on the offense, even dedication of the five year plans to building military might was not rapid enough to prepare for the German onslaught. It was not until Stalin saw the swift German successes in Poland and then in France that he decided on defensive preparations together with economic mobilization for future offensive warfare. Time now became Stalin's most precious strategic resource. He knew it would take two years to complete his rearmament plan.<sup>40</sup>

As we examine Operation Barbarossa and, particularly, the Soviet military's preparation and conduct of the defense, many of these theoretical themes will be revisited. Of particular note, the Soviet Armed Forces were structured into operational echelons in order to move more rapidly to the offensive. This, combined with the fortified regions, provided the defense in-depth as described by Tukhachevski. Following Tukhachevski's logic, the defense would be protracted, aimed at attrition of the Germans so that conditions could be met to move to the offensive. Though they were unable to mount any successful counteroffensive until 1942, theoretical development caused the Soviets to lean toward offensive action as soon as possible. Additionally, the defensive design for the campaign included husbanding the bulk of their firepower strength by removing artillery from the frontier regions. This ensured that the artillery would not be lost to Hitler's initial blows, but would be available for the counteroffensive. Finally, the combined arms



concept was revisited as the Soviets attempted to find a means for slowing and finally stopping the German advance.

### **HISTORY - OPERATION BARBAROSSA**

In order to fully examine applicability of the defense against Operation Barbarossa as a model for future use and study, we must be familiar with the operation as it unfolded. In this section we will first examine Hitler's plan and the actions of his armed forces up to the gates of Moscow. Then we will examine Stalin and his Red Army's activity during the same time frame. The purpose for this brief walk through the campaign is not merely to regurgitate a series of facts, but to build a base for later analysis.

First, we will examine Hitler's plan and briefly outline his accomplishments. German planning for Barbarossa began as early as July 1940. Hitler had always considered communism a threat and considered the Slavs to be lesser human beings, only slightly better than the Jews.<sup>41</sup> Two plans for invading Russia were presented to Hitler before he adopted his own. The first, presented by Major General Erich Marcks as early as August 1940, placed the main drive through Belorussia and on to Moscow along with a drive in the south toward Kiev.<sup>42</sup> In December 1940 General Franz Halder presented a variant that added a third major thrust to Leningrad. Halder favored strengthening the Moscow drive at the expense of the southern, Kiev advance. Moscow was to be the main objective. He later

added that his intent was to destroy as many Russian forces as possible and that they could be found on the road to Moscow.<sup>43</sup> Hitler's own variant, also developed in December 1940, placed the emphasis in the north with Leningrad as the main target. The southern operation took on even less significance with occupation of the western Ukraine as its object. The difference in main effort between Halder and Hitler was to cause considerable conflict and confusion during the campaign.<sup>44</sup>

The German Army's "...three masses - Army Groups North (Leeb), Center (Bock) and South (Rundsted) - were each aligned on one of the historic invasion routes which led into European Russia, towards Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev respectively."<sup>45</sup> Though Hitler envisioned operations in the north to be the main effort, the strongest forces were placed in Army Group Center. Panzer Groups 3 and 2, commanded by Hoth and Guderian, proved to have the most rapidly advancing forces.

Leeb's advances in the north were initially impeded by lakes, forests, and rivers. With only three Panzer divisions at his disposal, Leeb's Army Group North did manage to occupy Lithuania and secure bridgeheads across the Dvina River by 30 June. Ten days later, Panzer Group 4 found itself only sixty miles from Leningrad.

From this point on, Leeb would find taking Leningrad to be an impossible task. Leningrad was protected from the rear by Lake Ladoga, making encirclement impossible. The city's

population constructed "concentric defense lines around the city, including 620 miles of earthworks, 400 miles of anti-tank ditch, 370 miles of barbed wire entanglement and 5000 pillboxes."<sup>46</sup> Additionally, the Finnish Army, which was to link up with Army Group North to encircle the city, decided it would take no more territory than it had lost to the USSR previously. The Finns would advance no further than to the north of Lake Ladoga, lending little or no support to Leeb's advances. Even with the later attachment of Hoth's Panzer Group, Leeb could not muster sufficient power to breach Leningrad's fortifications and capture the city.

Though the attack to the north to encircle Leningrad was to be the German main effort, the audacity and success of Bock's Army Group Center caused Hitler and his staff to alter the plan. Bock's attack encircled the Bialystok Salient with relative ease. It then ran a series of large encirclements through Minsk to Smolensk, generally along the same line of advance used by Napoleon in 1812. Army Group Center had the strongest armored forces in Hoth's Panzer Group 3 and Guderian's Panzer Group 2. Its attack was preceded by air strikes that destroyed better than 700 Soviet aircraft on the ground and in flight.<sup>47</sup>

With the mission to encircle the largest of Red forces, Bock's Army Group Center found itself attempting to close the rings on three groups within the first week of fighting. These

included a small ring around Brest-Litovsk, one in the Bialystok, and one at Volkovysk. By 9 July the Minsk pocket was closed, and by 5 August, Smolensk was taken. All told, the Germans had encircled and trapped 89 divisions at this point.<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile, in Army Group South, advances were initially not as rapid as in the north and center. The blame for slower advances was placed on Rundsted having only five armored divisions. He also led the allied contingent of Romanian and Hungarian divisions, considered to be less than audacious. His Army Group ran up against the South-Western Front, commanded by one of Stalin's best generals, Kirponos. Kirponos conducted pinching counterattacks at the flanks of the Panzer Group using T-34 equipped tank armies. These armies did not prove to be strong enough to close the pincers of the counterattack though, and Army Group South was able to reach Lvov by 30 June. The next stop for the Germans was Kiev, which would be taken with the aid of Guderian's Panzer Group attacking from the north.

OKH, in particular Halder, saw the continuation of the advance toward Moscow as key to winning the campaign. This had been Halder's intention from the beginning.<sup>49</sup> Hitler viewed the effort differently. He saw an opportunity to command the entire Ukraine by sending Guderian's Panzer Group to the south to support Rundsted in late July. By this time, Army Group Center had advanced 440 miles in just six

weeks and stood only 220 miles from Moscow.<sup>50</sup> But Army Group Center, as Hitler saw it, had not destroyed enemy forces as they were encircled. In fact, many were able to escape encirclement because of the gaps between the fast moving Panzers and the following infantry forces.

The nineteen days it took to support operations in the north and south may well have spared Stalin defeat in 1941.<sup>51</sup> German progress had slowed down considerably. During August, advancing on Moscow became an on again - off again enterprise. But Hitler, intent on seizing economic objectives between Kiev and Kharkov at this point could not be persuaded to resume the Moscow advance. Meanwhile, Stalin busied his forces with shoring up shattered defenses in front of Moscow.

On 6 September, Hitler issued Fuhrer Directive No. 35 which allowed Army Group Center to renew its advance on Moscow after completion of the encirclement and destruction of the Red Army.<sup>52</sup> Even with Guderian rushing back to Army Group Center to lead the advance, the Army Group could not begin its advance until late September. The German Army strength had been reduced by more than half a million men at this point. Guderian found his Panzer Group facing the superior Soviet T-34 tank for the first time. The Russians also learned from earlier mistakes. They were now counterattacking with a fixing force of infantry in the face of the Germans, while attacking the flanks with mass tank formations.<sup>53</sup>

German success in capturing territory was negated by the fact that they could not accomplish Hitler's chief goal, destruction of the Red Army. By the time of the first snowfall in early October, it was too late for the Germans. The winter's hardened ground initially offered hope to the Germans. They pushed to within 40 miles of Moscow by 16 November, even though they were at 65% strength in tanks. The final thrust failed as it hit the final Soviet defenses along with the harsh Russian winter. Temperatures reached below -20 degrees Celsius, causing over 100,000 German frostbite casualties.<sup>54</sup> By 29 November there were no further German advances though they had reached to within 18 miles of the capital.

In the south, Rundsted's Army Group had occupied the Crimea. A head on clash between Rundsted's panzers and Timoshenko's Front ensued at Rostov-on-Don in late November. The Russians retook the city and the Germans began digging in for the winter at a line on the river Mius, fifty miles behind Rostov.<sup>55</sup> Army Group North was halted outside Leningrad with its furthest advance along the southern shore of Lake Ladoga. Here it began the siege of the city which was to last three years.

The fact that the Germans eventually failed in Operation Barbarossa was not attributed to brilliance in Soviet defense planning or execution. Hitler's change of direction on several occasions was partly to blame. The harsh winter and the

German's unpreparedness for it were also to blame. As we continue we will examine how the Soviets defended during the campaign.

In July 1940 the Soviet General Staff began searching for a strategy that could meet a German attack they knew would eventually come. The first requirement was to determine where the German main effort would be. The General Staff guessed it to be to take the Ukraine, but did not discount an advance north of the Pripyat Marshes toward Smolensk and then to Moscow.<sup>56</sup> The General Staff therefore proposed to deploy the Soviet main forces between the Pripyat Marshes and the Baltic coast so that the forces would be in position to begin an early counter offensive. Stalin saw the main effort in the South and had the staff rework its plans to place the Soviet main forces there. Both Stalin and the General Staff were incorrect in guessing the German main effort. The Soviets also falsely assumed that their military could carry the war into German territory early on.

Georgii Zhukov became the Chief of the General Staff after proving in January 1941 that the Soviet Army was, in fact, ill-prepared for a German invasion. Zhukov added realistic goals to the basic precepts of the combined arms, deep attack philosophies of the 1930s, and gave the Red Army concrete and workable defensive plans for 1941. In seeing what Hitler was capable of doing in France, Zhukov immediately ordered the

revamping of the Soviet tank and mechanized infantry capability. He also knew that the Soviet Army would not be ready for large scale offensive operations in 1941. Stalin was falsely pinning his hopes on Germany delaying an attack for two or three years, despite the growing indicators that war would begin sooner.<sup>57</sup>

As we approach the 22 June 1941 attack, we will examine what Stalin knew about Hitler's intention to attack. This directly relates to Stalin's short term preparation of the Army for war and mobilization of forces, a key area of conflict between Stalin and Zhukov.

Stalin was warned continuously beginning in March 1941 of Hitler's attack intentions. His own ambassadors and military attaches abroad, Soviet agents, foreign governments already at war with Germany, and the neutral United States warned Stalin. The German Luftwaffe systematically overflowed Russian territory. The Germans also penetrated the Soviet border zone with patrols dressed in Russian uniforms. "These (reports) were supplemented as early as April by reports from Richard Sorge, the Comintern spy in Tokyo who was privy to the dispatches of the German ambassador..., that preparations for war were complete."<sup>58</sup> Churchill warned that the Germans had deployed armor directly to southern Poland as early as 3 April. By mid-June, Stalin was warned of the exact date of the attack and was provided with the German objectives.



"Stalin by then had a plethora of evidence that German (with Romanian and Finnish) forces stood ready in millions to attack... Yet in the face of it all he clung to his belief that every unwelcome interpretation of the facts was the fruit of Western ill-will."<sup>59</sup> Stalin was either so convinced that the Germans would not attack, or so hopeful that a settlement could be reached that he continued sending train loads of oil, grain, and metal to Germany all the way up to the invasion date. These were part of the terms of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.<sup>60</sup> Stalin also felt that if he fully mobilized the Red Army, it might have been seen as provocation.

Stalin also kept the information about the German attack from his field commanders. When General Kirponos in the Kiev Military District ordered his troops to the frontier, Stalin countermanded the order. When Zhukov went to Stalin on 21 June to announce that the Germans had cut the telephone lines into Russia and that a German deserter reported that the attack would begin at 0400 the next morning, Stalin replied that it was too early to issue a warning order. Zhukov did manage to get Stalin to agree to some preparatory measures, though.<sup>61</sup> "However, the directives did not order mobilization nor fully alert the border troops to the danger in which they stood. In any case it reached them too late."<sup>62</sup>

There were many other problems in Soviet defenses besides lack of early warning. The Russian border fortified

regions had been partially dismantled to be assembled in the areas of Poland, most notably in the Bialystok salient, occupied two years earlier. Zhukov opposed moving the old fortifications as he felt they were more viable than those that could be placed in the salient. Still, over 2500 fortified points had been built by June 1941. Most, though, were only equipped with machine guns. Zhukov moved the artillery that was designated for these fortifications to the former fortified border region further to the rear of the salient. In early 1941 Zhukov had exposed the fallacy of a forward defense that butted the Red Army defenses up against the Germans. He proved this fallacy in the war games played in January 1941. This proved to be the deciding point in his appointment by Stalin as the Chief of the General Staff. Zhukov proved that forward positioning did not allow the echeloning of defenses needed to ward off the thrusts expected to be used by the Germans.<sup>63</sup>

Zhukov appears to be a great student of Tukhachevski. He never intended, in defensive planning, to allow the main body of the Red Army to be placed close to the initial shock of the armored thrusts. Placement of their main forces so close to the German's initial blows would have been counter to the theory of echelonment, would have deprived the Red Army of maneuver, and would have subjected it to being cut off and annihilated. Zhukov also knew that he would have to drain the

energy of the thrusts of the German advance. His solution was for an active defense in depth. This would call for risking sizeable forces in the Bialystok Salient, even to the point of sacrifice.<sup>64</sup> The forces in the salient would be expected to deal with the German infantry that followed the Panzer pincers in their attempts to encircle Soviet forces. Combined arms units in the salient could hold their own and possibly disrupt the Panzer lines of communications. Smaller formations of infantry and cavalry could later form even smaller groups and act as partisans.<sup>65</sup>

The three armies in the salient were left with their armor pretty much intact so that the soldiers would not feel abandoned and would fight rather than surrender.<sup>66</sup> But much of the artillery, tractor haulers, engineers and pontoon bridge units were removed under the pretext of training exercises. Zhukov did not want to sacrifice these essential pieces of equipment. They were sent to the Stalin Line, the fortified region of the original Russian-Polish border, to reinforce the second echelon.<sup>67</sup>

Zhukov allowed Pavlov, the Front commander in the Bialystok salient, to attempt to use his mechanized corps to pinch off the Panzer thrusts at their flanks. But Zhukov knew these attempts would be unsuccessful against a better equipped and experienced German army. Still, Pavlov might slow down the advance so that Zhukov could continue to

prepare the second echelon and the strategic reserve. Zhukov never intended to use either the second echelon or the strategic reserve to support or bolster Pavlov's fight. Without being told of these decisions, Pavlov's front was to be sacrificed for the good of the total effort.<sup>68</sup>

The second echelon of defense was designed to absorb and blunt the momentum of the German Panzer groups. This echelon would be positioned initially on the Stalin Line, which was up to 300 miles behind the frontier defenses. Included were a number of detached tank brigades. The combination of strong points and counterattacks by the tanks was to deal serious blows to the Panzer Groups. The second echelon was then expected to continue an active defense.

The strategic reserve was to deliver the final blow on the Germans. Zhukov's problem was two-fold. Stalin was reluctant to fully mobilize the Red Army so the strategic reserve could be readied as early as possible. Also, since a two-front war was possible, with Japan's intentions always questionable, forces in the east could not immediately be moved to the west to constitute a portion of the reserve.

As discussed earlier, with the relative ease of the German advance, almost none of Zhukov's and Stalin's preparations worked to slow or stop the German advance. The advance was even more rapid than Zhukov and Stalin had foreseen. While the Germans were encircling the armies in the Bialystok

Salient, the Red Army was still mobilizing and moving forces forward to the Stalin Line. The tactical echelon, consisting of border guard units and those armies in the fortified region, was seriously undermanned and lacked sufficient fire power. The 48 divisions positioned within 10 to 50 kilometers of the frontier were overrun almost immediately. The intermediate tactical zone, forward of the Stalin Line, was encircled within a matter of days.<sup>69</sup> The Stalin Line itself proved to be nothing more than a thin and incomplete belt of border fortifications, easily penetrated by the Germans.<sup>70</sup> As the Germans continued to advance beyond the Stalin Line, Stalin tried to rush replacements forward to slow the German advance. He could not use his strategic reserve to conduct a counteroffensive, at least not in 1941. It would be needed to shore up forward defenses, being employed piecemeal all along the shattered front.<sup>71</sup>

To his credit, Stalin was able to build extensive defenses in three rings around Moscow as the Germans continued their advances. Most of the workers around Moscow were women who built trench lines, fortifications, and performed other menial labor to save the city and possibly the country. These defenses, along with the harsh winter conditions, finally stopped the German advance.

## ANALYSIS

We see, in examining the campaign, how many things went wrong for Stalin and Zhukov in their defenses. The fact remains that the Germans lost the campaign, so we must analyze what went right for the Soviets. There were no single great causes for Soviet victory in the campaign. Much was sheer luck. In fact, due to the enormous loss of territory and loss of soldiers, Soviets consider the period quite an embarrassment and a considerable defeat. Still, there were operations and tactics discovered during the campaign that were successful enough to warrant mention.

The fighting quality of the Soviet soldier is nearly unquestionable. In many cases encircled soldiers with their leaders fought to the last round of ammunition. This could be attributed to the German Army's poor treatment of Red Army prisoners. Over 3 million died in captivity.<sup>72</sup> Then too, it could have been a fear of Stalin and his NKVD execution squads.<sup>73</sup> Regardless, even though over 5 million Red Army soldiers were taken prisoner during the Great Patriotic War, many encircled units continued to fight to the end and many escaped the loose German rings.

The Germans were slowed in their advance due to many different events. They were weakened sufficiently so that they could not capture Moscow in the end. Much blame for this must be placed on Hitler's changing of the main effort. Moving

Army Group Center's Panzer Groups to both the north and south at a time when they were enjoying tremendous successes on their line of advance was a mistake that may have cost him the entire campaign.

The Soviets view this differently. They believe that they learned during the defenses in the Bialystok Salient and in later attempts to counterattack, that success could only be enjoyed through combined arms tactics. Successful counterattacks, though, had to be conducted with large formations making the most of firepower through combining the efforts of tanks, artillery, and infantry.

In late July 1941, after a disagreement with Stalin, Zhukov was removed as Chief of the General Staff. He was given command of the Reserve Front and charged with reducing the Yelnya Salient, created by the rapid advances of Guderian's Panzer Group 2. He waited until late August so he could have an additional army to support the operation. In previous counterattacks, front commanders used small formations, as small as battalions, to reduce penetrations, but with little success. Zhukov conducted probing attacks in order to gather intelligence, but used entire divisions with armor and artillery support focused at narrow fronts to break through the German lines.<sup>74</sup> "These tactics were honed and refined with great effectiveness during the later war years"<sup>75</sup>, much in keeping with their theoretical development.

In contemporary practices the Soviets also see value in the fortified regions or zones. As noted here, the fortified regions at the initial line of defense as well as on the Stalin Line were easily overrun by the Germans. Fortifications were most effective surrounding Moscow.<sup>76</sup> Additionally, the Soviets found that in the forward area defense, those units that were most successful were the forward detachments that used "great activity and maneuvering" combined with "steadfastness and determination."<sup>77</sup>

Finally, and certainly not last in significance, Zhukov realized before the war began that German technical superiority and experience would quickly overwhelm forward defenses. His and Stalin's calculated removal of artillery from these positions so it could be employed in depth rather than be destroyed or captured was a justified necessity. They both knew their shortfalls in firepower required time to be overcome. By husbanding these resources and moving the military industrial base to the east and to safer ground, they were preparing for operations in the future. Those operations would be more closely aligned with their studied theoretical principles of mass, firepower, and maneuver through offensive operations.

Soviet defenses and the conduct of operations during Hitler's Operation Barbarossa were complicated and required the utmost in flexibility on the part of commanders at all



levels. It was most challenging for Stalin and Zhukov, who dealt in both the strategic and operational realms. Though Stalin announced on 10 July that he was the Supreme Commander of the Soviet Armed Forces<sup>78</sup>, he constantly turned to Zhukov for advice and to manage operational details of the campaign.

Soviet defenses were planned in-depth, much in line with previous theoretical development. Defenses along the initial line of contact with the Germans were designed only to slow the German advance. This tactical echelon included use of tactical reserves to conduct limited counterattacks. The main line of defense, along the Stalin Line, was the second echelon. By design, it was to stop the German advance through the use of fixed fortifications coupled with counterattacks by combined arms units. The strategic reserve, eventually mobilized around Moscow, was to begin the counteroffensive when the enemy advances were halted due to the activities of the second echelon. This basic design, though unable to stop the German advance, was essentially the same description of defenses made by Tukhachevski. Tukhachevski's prediction of a protracted defensive campaign using fortified regions and defenses in-depth was precisely accurate. His deep operations theories would come when the Soviets reached at least a parity in equipment and technological strength.

Theoretical developments prior to Hitler's attack called for resorting to offensive action as soon as possible. Defensive preparations were, therefore, insufficient since the Soviets were constantly looking for opportunities to conduct offensives. Zhukov constantly urged Stalin to mobilize reserves early. The reserves were to be the counteroffensive force. They were, instead, used to shore up defenses in the second echelon rather than to mount the counteroffensive as the defenses could not stop the German advance.

Turning again to the criteria to determine the viability of this campaign as a model for future use, there are key elements of the campaign and theory that must be reviewed. Beginning with the relationship of the Marxist-Leninist historical and scientific dialectic ideological test, we can look at the campaign in several ways. As a whole, the campaign can be viewed as a thesis requiring a clash with an antithesis - possibly a pure offense. In this sense, the synthesis would be a mix of offense and defense close to what the Soviets view as their current doctrine. This may be a too simplistic view of the dialectic process as the process is not quite so simple. The dialectic process provides the scientific evidence that a theory is correct or incorrect. To examine the campaign dialectically in such broad terms, may not be the most efficient use of the dialectic as it includes little scientific effort or detail.

Another possibility would be to view the current capabilities and operational art in the Soviet military as the thesis and use Gorbachev's "defensive defense" represented by this campaign as the antithesis. The Soviet military might prefer to view this campaign in this manner. Synthesis might include a mixture of offense and defense with defense receiving more emphasis than it has in the past. It could also be the military's justification to Gorbachev to convince him, within the Soviet ideological framework, to drop a purely defensive doctrine as it may be scientifically unsupportable. This would especially be true if, in the synthesis process, the military attempted to prove that the defensive side of this doctrine is ideologically flawed. It might provide a resurgence to the status quo doctrine of offense over all other forms of war.

Finally, if we take pieces of the campaign that were considered defensive successes and update these successes through the dialectic process that has taken place over the past fifty years, we may then develop a more realistic synthesis. For instance, certain aspects of forward fortifications used during the campaign were seen as successful. These fortified regions and strong points are being researched today and compared to today's construction of hardened command posts, missile sites, submarine pens, and civilian fallout shelters.<sup>79</sup> The comparison is then synthesized into creating state of the

art fortifications for future border use. This would be the more logical use of the dialectic process involving the 1941 defenses.

The second criterion, that the model must meet the needs established by the Soviet strategy of "reasonable sufficiency" is even more difficult to visualize than the dialectic process. First there is a conflict in the USSR as to what constitutes true "reasonable sufficiency". As stated before, Gorbachev further defined it as "defensive defense" but left it to his subordinates to further define. Many military members do not desire changes that would reduce their power base or reduce the strength of current forces.

In an article published in Morskoy Sbornik in 1988, Rear Admiral B. Gulin and Captain Second Rank I. Knodyrev, in discussing the defensive direction of Soviet military doctrine, stated:

Our military doctrine is proceeding from the assumption that the main mode of action of the Soviet Armed Forces will be defensive operations with subsequent offensive actions aimed at routing the enemy.<sup>80</sup>

This is a fair description of the defensive campaign of 1941. If the defenses worked to a "reasonable sufficiency", we could easily sign up to this criteria being met. However, it is doubtful that the Soviets would view the loss of more than sixty divisions as "sufficient" rather than excessive to their defensive strategy today. The Soviets would most likely not consider

allowing a force to reach within eighteen miles of Moscow as "reasonable".

Additionally, the model implies creation of a sufficient defense against a superior foe. Gorbachev is counting on creating the conditions through his diplomatic measures to eliminate such superiority. His stated goal is that neither NATO nor the US will be capable of doing to the USSR what Germany did in 1941.

When looking at the "defensive defense", we cannot deny that the model was just that. Though Zhukov as well as leaders before him thought they could mount an immediate counteroffensive, they did not have the combat power or initiative to do so.

The final criterion is determining if the model demonstrates success or potential success sufficient to accomplish stated Soviet goals. The fact that the campaign is viewed as a failure by the Soviets cannot be ignored as we examine this criteria. In fact, this weighs heavily on the minds of Soviet military leaders.<sup>81</sup> However, the campaign was a success in that it eventually stopped Hitler and gave the Soviets the impetus to mount their counteroffensive. The cost was tremendously high. The amount of terrain lost and numbers of soldiers and units killed or captured made the counteroffensive a slower and more difficult process.

The Soviet military views victory as "success in battle, the inflicting of defeat on the enemy's troops, and the achievement of objectives set for the battle, operation, or war as a whole."<sup>82</sup> From this perspective, the 1941 campaign saw successes and failures. It was not decisive in defeating the enemy as required or implied by the definition. But, as discussed earlier, certain aspects of the campaign, to include some of the tactical operations, were successes.

### CONCLUSIONS

The Soviet doctrine of defense today is not purely defensive as Gorbachev would want us to believe. It may be his wish that the USSR and US have no capability through force structure, weapons systems, or intent to be able to attack. Certainly he has expressed these wishes in his negotiations and speeches. The fact remains that the Soviet military still has a tremendous offensive capability. "In principle, armed forces can always be used both defensively and offensively. Even a defensive force structure will inevitably comprise offensive elements for operational/tactical counter-attacks."<sup>83</sup>

This same capability existed in the model presented in this monograph. The Soviets had the numbers of troops and equipment available to mix offense and defense in their campaign against Hitler. Both soldiers and equipment were, though, inferior to those of the Germans. The result was a rapid advance that placed the Germans within eighteen miles

of Moscow. Up to this point, Soviet operational defenses were almost a complete failure. Only the combination of Soviet tenacity in never completely giving up, Hitler's own mistakes, and the harsh Russian winter prevented a German victory.

There are implications for the future that can be drawn from use of this model. Combined arms operations will continue to dominate Soviet theory and practice. This theme dominated early theoretical development and was constantly espoused by Zhukov during Operation Barbarossa. In fact, as the Soviets began their withdrawal of tank units from eastern Germany in 1989, as a part of unilateral reductions, they converted some tank regiments to motorized rifle regiments. These motorized rifle regiments remained in Germany. The Soviets withdrew 63 tanks from these regiments, but added 87 BMPs and additional tank killing capability. They also added 650 soldiers and officers to these units.<sup>84</sup> As these units are withdrawn into Soviet territory, they would most likely comprise either a first or second line of defense should this model be adopted by the Soviets. Their combined arms structure still provides a significant offensive capability, nearly as strong as when they were tank regiments.

As stated throughout this monograph, the model for defense designed by Stalin and Zhukov was to be a temporary defense followed by a counteroffensive. Adoption of this model implies that current forces would be trained to reinforce

fortified regions and provide a defense until the Soviets could mobilize personnel and equipment to conduct a counteroffensive. Certainly the Soviets would want to learn from past mistakes and not underestimate their enemy's potential. They would also want to ensure they have the capability to mobilize rapidly enough to avoid great losses. They would draw on the lessons of the past and, using the dialectic process, ensure mistakes are not repeated. The use of operational level counterattacks rather than tactical level counterattacks would be one lesson that would not be lost in the process. This has been scientifically proven to be of considerable value, just as the combined arms concept has been proven to be of great value.

The most serious implication in adopting this model is the negotiating advantage it may provide the Soviets in the future. Implied is that adoption of this model poses no threat of an offensive by the Soviets. If the Soviets adopt a structure and readiness level similar to what they had in 1941, they would be vulnerable to attack by a strong, mobile force. The Soviets may be able to convince the West, through negotiations, that they are serious about limiting their offensive capability through adoption of this model. This may provide the spark to forcing further reductions in Western military might, since all parties would feel secure.<sup>85</sup> The Soviets would have to rely on



mobilization to rebuild an offensive capability, an overt act that is relatively identifiable by Western intelligence capabilities.

The model is also relatively inexpensive to pursue. It would require little preparation to build defenses similar to those built in 1941. Force structure exists to man the border regions and form a strong, relatively mobile second echelon. Adoption of this inexpensive model may provide the Gorbachev government some economic breathing space if it does not have to continue competing with the West to regain a technological edge.

In this monograph we see more failure than success in the defenses against Operation Barbarossa. There were some successes demonstrated primarily by Zhukov that can be considered useful for future Soviet defensive planning. Scientific analysis of this model or parts of this model could be useful if the Soviets are to continue examining the defense as they say they will. As a whole the model is neither reasonable nor sufficient, and it does not demonstrate great success. It does provide some examples of tactics and operational art that can be built upon for future use.

The use of historical models to build on development of doctrine in the Soviet military has a long tradition dating back to their Civil War. The 1941 defensive campaign provides an additional model for analysis that is significantly different from those currently being developed.

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